

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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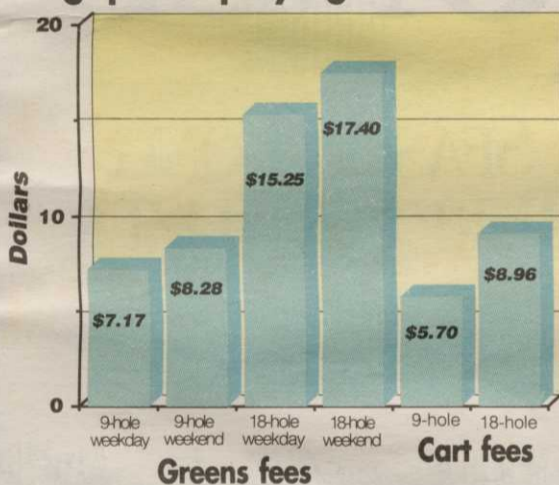
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Hawaii council nixes impact fees

By Peter Blais

The Honolulu City Council has unanimously overridden Mayor Frank Fasi's veto and adopted a golf course development policy that rejects the mayor's suggested \$100-million impact fees.

Instead the policy encourages developers to integrate the golf course project into the local community while setting strict social, economic and environmental requirements.

Bill 129 establishes guidelines for judging among the numerous propos-

als submitted for review annually on the island of Oahu, where at least 40 courses are in preliminary planning stages.

But critics complain the ordinance still fails to address how many more courses should be allowed on the island or where they can be located. One of the primary areas of concern is near already crowded Kaneohe Bay on the northeast side of Oahu, where another 14 courses have been proposed and residents are concerned about the bay's water quality.

"The ordinance is rational and scien-

tifically based," said Stuart Cohen of Environmental & Turf Services, a Wheaton, Md.-based firm that has done environmental risk assessments in Hawaii. "It takes the proposals, provides a rational basis for making decisions, and requires that good people are available to manage the turf."

Cohen, who testified at an August workshop concerning Bill 129, agreed that the number of courses and where they should be located are important issues that still need to be addressed on

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One of the most talked-about holes at architect Tom Fazio's Ocean Course at Pelican Hill Golf Club in Newport Beach, Calif., is the 13th. It features two small greens fronted by a large area of coastal scrub and sand. The Ocean Course opened in November. A second 18-hole venue at Pelican Hill — the Canyon Course — is slated for completion some time later. The project was developed by The Irvine Co. For more on Pelican Hill and other new golf courses, see pages 27-43.

Photo by John Connell

The Best of 1991

The annual *Golf Course News* survey votes are in. The winners are:

Architect:
Tom Fazio
story, page 27

Builder:
Wadsworth
story, page 27

Resort Developer:
Landmark Land Co.
story, page 45

Conditioned Resort Course on Tour:
TPC at Sawgrass
story, page 17

Sherman Hollow dealt a blow by Vt. board

By Peter Blais

The Vermont Environmental Board has denied the latest attempt to obtain a building permit for the Sherman Hollow Golf Course in Huntington.

But course developers, who have spent seven years and hundreds of thousands of dollars seeking approval for the multimillion-dollar resort under the state's strict Act 250 development

See related story on Squaw Creek, page 17.

law, are not giving up.

They feel the board made "substantial mistakes" and are asking it to reverse its ruling, according to Sherman Hollow President Paul Truax.

"It's a step we had to take within 30 days of the board's decision," said Truax,

who submitted the appeal on the final day of the one-month deadline.

The board denied the latest reconsideration for a land-use permit — which included the developers' promise not to use chemical pesticides or fertilizers — because of problems regarding waste disposal, streams, water supplies and soil erosion.

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USGA puts rebuffed TRACS on hold

By Peter Blais

The U.S. Golf Association Green Section has temporarily shelved plans for its new construction consulting service after receiving complaints from golf course architects and builders that it

represents competition and unnecessary oversight.

Green Section Director Jim Snow still hopes to establish the program, but will delay its launch until some "unfortunate misunderstandings" are clarified.

Snow announced the introduction of Turf Renovation and Construction Services in mid-November.

Headed by Mid-Continent Section Director Jim Moore, TRACS is designed as a

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Honolulu City Council nixes impact fees with

Continued from page 1
a statewide basis.

"State planners must decide what their goal is regarding golf," he said. "If they want Hawaii to be a golf mecca, that means one amount of courses. If they want it to just be a golf resort, well, that's a little less. And if they just want to fill the needs of inter-island interests, that's even less.

"Once they've done that, then they have to decide on the most appropriate places to put golf courses. They haven't done that yet, but they are working on it."

The new ordinance applies to public and private facilities as well as both new courses and renovations.

Fasi wanted to charge developers multimillion-dollar impact fees and use the money to build affordable housing.

The council opted to judge course proposals, in part, on optional "community integration plans." Councilman John DeSoto called the impact fees "an extortion fee" prior to the council's vote.

"The council developed the golf course policy in conjunction with many developers," said Lori Kunioka, a research assistant in DeSoto's office. "They were comfortable with the plan, but were very concerned about the impact fees."

Honolulu-based golf course architect Robin Nelson agreed that impact fees were the major concern of developers. He and others believe the impact fee-less ordinance passed by the council in late October will have little effect on the number of courses that receive preliminary approval, averaging about five yearly.

"It might slow down the approval process a little bit," Nelson said. "But it shouldn't discourage developers. Our office has been busier than ever the last few weeks."

If included in a golf course proposal, the community integration program may include, but isn't limited to, an employment plan that encourages training and hiring local residents on the project; public play at affordable rates and convenient times; junior golf programs; availability of clubhouses and other amenities to the public; hiking, biking and jogging paths; and considering local suppliers to provide developmental, operational and maintenance materials.

The council will review the community integration program when it decides whether to rezone land or issue a plan review use permit authorizing construction.

In developing the ordinance, the council acknowledged the "unprecedented" interest in golf course development. Golf courses can be a positive land use in that they contribute to the economy, increase the tax base, provide recreation and open space, according to the ordinance.

But, the council also found that excessive course development can

displace agricultural uses and disrupt rural lifestyles; increase land and home prices while the island is suffering from a lack of affordable housing; potentially harm the environment; and use large amounts of the city's limited water supply.

The ordinance's social and growth criteria encourage open space that can be enjoyed by the community and be seen from public roadways and other areas; discourages displacement of people or land uses without adequate com-

ensation and/or relocation plans; discourages development of land rated "A" or "B" by the land study bureau classification, although it does not forbid it; encourages public play at reasonable rates; discourages concentrations of courses that cause traffic problems; and discourages impacts and inaccessibility to archaeological, cultural and historic resources.

Golf courses should be compatible with surrounding uses and provide an appropriate buffer be-

tween incompatible uses (i.e. separating residential and agricultural uses), potentially incompatible levels of intensity for similar land uses (i.e. single-family residential and medium-or-high-density apartment uses), and dangerous conditions or areas (i.e. blast zones or flood-prone areas).

Economically, the chief planning officer can require investors to develop a forecast of the project's impact on land values and property taxes, which can be used for com-

paring various proposals.

Golf courses should not have any serious environmental consequences, according to the ordinance. Projects will not be approved unless every effort is made to reduce the use of pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and fertilizers. Applications, storage and disposal must comply with state and federal laws.

The chief planning officer will also judge proposals on how effectively they:



regional master development regulations

- Establish an integrated management plan to minimize fertilizers and biocides.

- Conduct modeling studies reflecting unique site characteristics and evaluate risks of fertilizer or biocide leaching and runoff into water or wetlands.

- Establish a ground water monitoring plan and system in accordance with the State Department of Health. It should include ground water, surface water and, if applicable, near-shore water monitoring

programs at least a year before construction starts to establish baseline water quality data. Periodic monitoring should continue for at least a year after construction ends and play begins.

- Establish a solid-waste disposal plan that includes lawn and landscape trimmings disposal, emphasizing on-site use and disposal.

- Promote water conservation by using non-potable water for irrigation in the following priority — secondary (effluent from a municip-

pal treatment plant), secondary or tertiary (effluent from a private treatment plant), brackish ground water (non-potable surface water, including establishment and use of catchment basins or partially desalinated water). All water source and irrigation plans are subject to Board of Water Supply review and approval.

- Design the course to maximize natural drainage, recharge the aquifer alleviate stream channelization and other formal drainage systems in

nearby areas.

- Protect and support existing wetlands and fish and wildlife habitats.

- Protect streams, rivers and coastal waters from runoff; minimize runoff during grading and construction; emphasize target golf; protect vegetation; use vegetation buffers to preserve water resources and provide landscaping with appropriate indigenous flora; and recognize water conservation principles.

- Employ a superintendent who

is or will be certified by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America within three years (only four of the GCSAA's certified members work in Hawaii) and is or will be a licensed pesticide and fertilizer applicator.

- Provide monitoring and reporting of pesticide applications, submit quarterly biocide use reports and prepare contingency plans for potentially harmful occurrences.

- Conform to the provisions of the Oahu Water Management Plan.

Jury awards \$3M to businessman in Hawaiian court

HONOLULU — Tokyo businessman Misuru Shirai has won a \$3 million jury verdict in state court in Honolulu over a proposed golf course development.

The verdict, against Haseko Realty Inc. and Sun Mari Corp., sided with Shirai's failed attempt to buy 2,400 acres in Waialua on Oahu from Castle & Cooke Inc.

Allegations included misappropriation of funds, failure to keep records, breach of fiduciary duties, self-dealing, conflict of interest, and concealment.

ASGCA targets misconceptions

Overcoming misconceptions surrounding golf and the environment is the purpose of a document the American Society of Golf Course Architects hopes will be ready for publication by its annual convention in May.

ASGCA President Tom Clark of Kensington, Md., is sifting through comments made on a preliminary draft during November's Allied Golf Association meeting and December's ASGCA executive committee gathering in Chicago.

The final document, which Clark hopes will run about a dozen pages, will be made available to local zoning and planning boards, state and federal regulatory agencies and people interested in golf course development.

It will use case studies involving development and maintenance practices at some of the country's best-known older courses, such as Cypress Point and Pine Valley, and newer courses built with the environment in mind, like the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island, S.C. and Old Marsh Golf Club in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

"We want to help lay people see what a golf course is and how it can interact successfully with the environment," Clark said.

"Too many people have negative views of golf courses. We are paying a high price in permitting costs and time delays and those extra expenses are being passed on to golfers. They should be aware of that."

Clark called publicizing that golf benefits the environment "one of the most important things the ASGCA has ever undertaken."

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